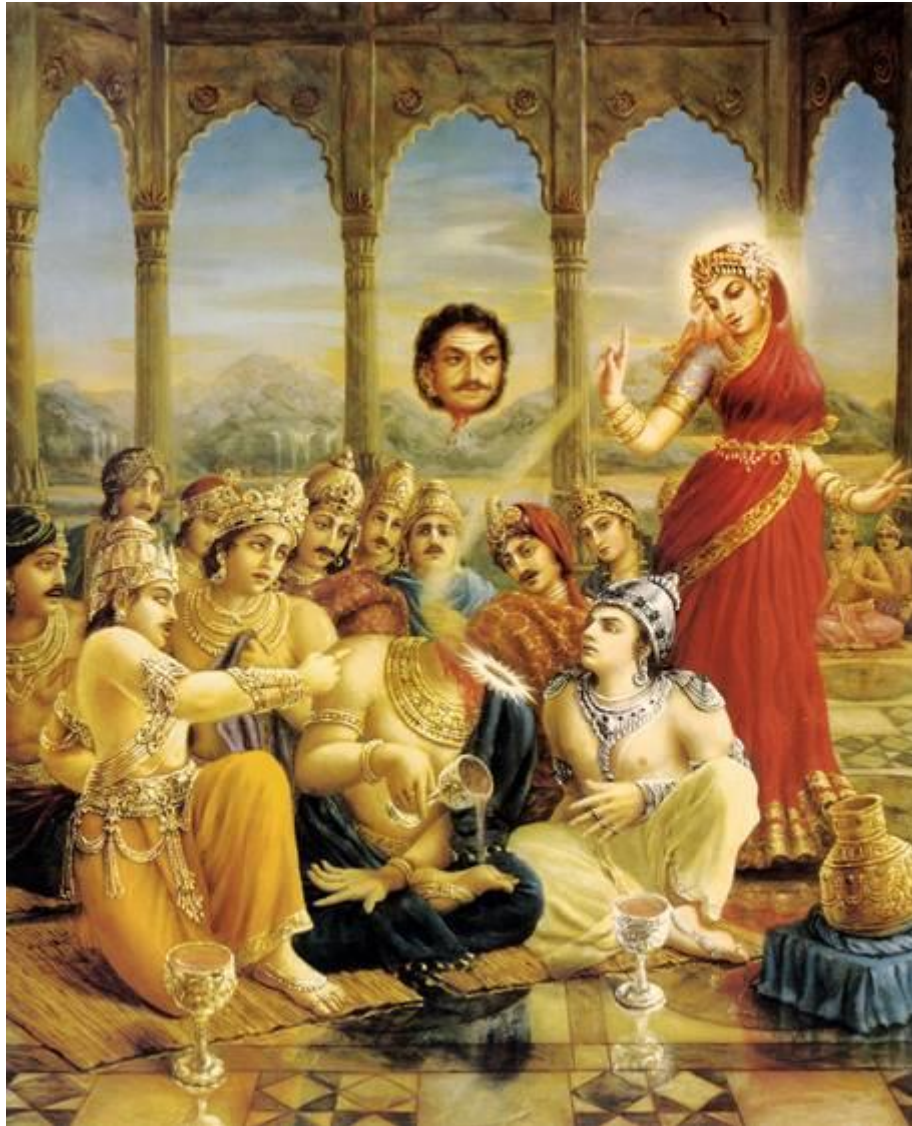


# Sri Jaganmohini Keshava Swamy Temple at Ryali



**"Ryali"** in local Telugu language means falling. According to the Srimad-Bhagavatam when the Demigods and Rakshasas were quarrelling over sharing of holy divine nectar, seeing this, Lord Krishna came in the guise of Mohini-Murti avatar to the rescue of demigods and convinced both the rivalry groups promising to distribute the divine nectar in equal share to Demigods and Rakshasas. But in the interest of universal peace the divine nectar was distributed among Demigods alone and after which Mohini disappeared. When Lord Siva saw the form of Mohini-Murti that Lord Krishna had assumed to trick the demons, he was immediately enchanted by Her beauty. He was so infatuated with Her that he began to chase Her, even in the presence of his wife, Parvati. As he was chasing, a flower from the plait of Mohini-Murti fell down, and Lord Siva smelt the flower. Siva surprisingly found Sri Krishna in the form of Mohini-Murti. Lord Krishna asked Siva about his experience. Lord Siva was not at all embarrassed by his actions. He was actually very happy and told, 'This is my pride; that the whole world knows that I am subordinate to You! The fact that You personally bewildered me shows the world that I am always subordinate to You.' The place where the flower from the plait of Mohini fell was named as Ryali the Telugu language meaning of "Fall".

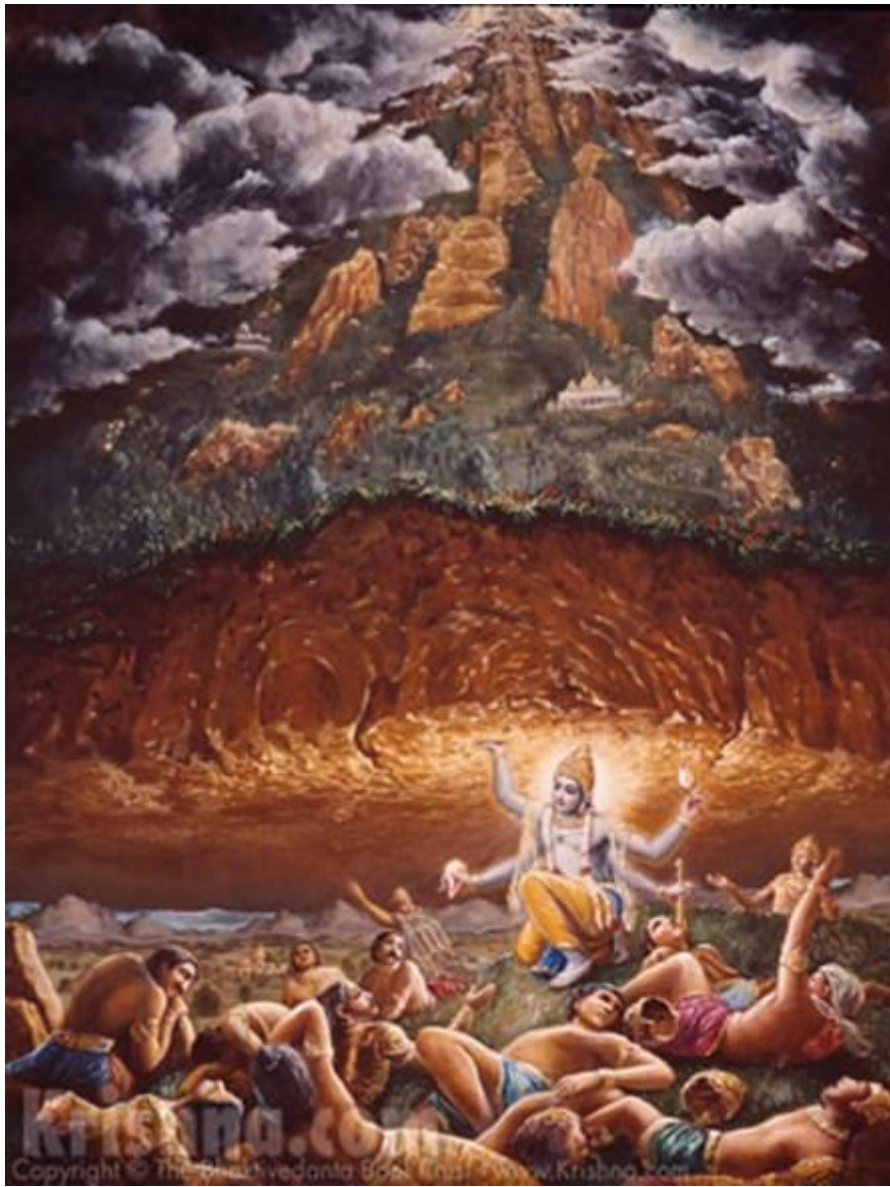
The Ryali temple is known as Sri Jaganmohini Keshava Swamy Temple. The most unique feature of this temple is the presiding deity of Sri Keshava Swamy Varu ("Sri Maha Visnu") is on the front-side and Sri Jaganmohini (Mohini-Murti) is on the back-side. Deity is five feet tall and three feet wide and has been beautifully and gracefully carved out of a single black Saligrama sila. The rare feature is that sacred Ganga in the form of Akasha Ganga

*always flows from the lotus feet of Sri Maha Vishnu. Ganges water keeps sprouting from the underground at the deity's feet. This water wets the flowers at the Lord's feet and the water from these flowers is sprinkled on devotees. The deity has the carving of ten incarnations (Dashavatara), along with consorts of Maha Visnu, Sridevi, Bhudevi, sage Narada with his musical instrument thumbura, Rambh, Urvasi, Kinnera, Kimpurusha, Lord Krishna lifting the Giri Govardhana, Adi Sesha, Garuda and Ganga. Lord in the form of Keshava Swamy has four hands. The temple's art and architecture are very unique.*

*Srimad-Bhagavatam Canto 8 Chapter 12 describes pastime of how Lord Siva was bewildered upon seeing the beautiful Mohini-Murti incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and how he later came to his senses. When Lord Siva heard about the pastimes performed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, in the form of an attractive woman, he mounted his bull and went to see the Lord. Accompanied by his wife, Uma, and his servants, the bhuta-gana, or ghosts, he approached the lotus feet of the Lord. Lord Siva offered obeisances to the Supreme Lord as the all-pervading Lord, the universal form, the supreme controller of creation, the Supersoul, the resting place for everyone, and the completely independent cause of all causes. Thus he offered prayers giving truthful descriptions of the Lord. Then he expressed his desire. Lord Krishna is very kind to His devotees. Therefore, to fulfil the desire of His devotee Lord Siva, He expanded His energy and manifested Himself in the form of a very beautiful and attractive woman.*

*Upon seeing this form, even Lord Siva was captivated. Later, by the grace of the Lord, he controlled himself. This demonstrates that by the power of the Lord's external energy, everyone is captivated by the form of woman in this material world. Again, however, by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can overcome the influence of maya. This was evinced by Lord Siva, the topmost devotee of the Lord. First he was captivated, but later, by the grace of the Lord, he restrained himself. It is declared in this connection that only a pure devotee can restrain himself from the attractive feature of maya. Otherwise, once a living entity is trapped by the external feature of maya, he cannot overcome it. After Lord Siva was graced by the Supreme Lord, he circumambulated the Lord along with his wife, Bhavani, and his companions, the ghosts. Then he left for his own abode. Sukadeva Gosvami concludes this chapter by describing the transcendental qualities of Uttamasloka, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Sri Krishna, and by declaring that one can glorify the Lord by nine kinds of devotional service, beginning with sravanam kirtanam.*

*Ryali is a small village situated between the rivers Vashishta and Gautami, tributaries of River Godavari. Ryali is only an hours' drive (40kms) from Rajahmundry. Rajahmundry is the place where Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu met Sri Ramananda Raya at the banks of Godavari River, and had discussions on the most confidential matters of Krishna Consciousness for ten days.*



### **Lord Vishnu Lifts the Mandara Mountain**

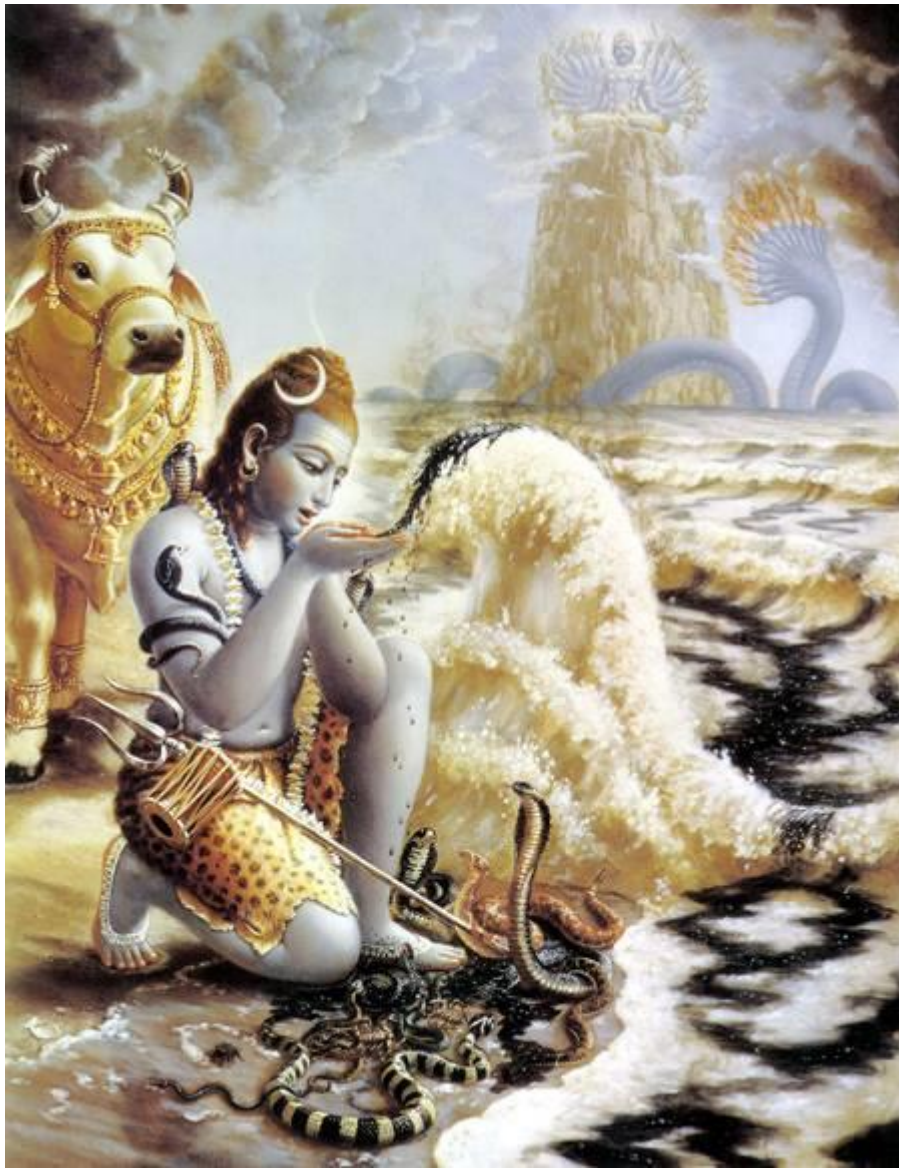
"Observing that most of the demons and the demigods had been crushed by the falling of the mountain, the Lord glanced over them and brought them back to life. Thus they became free from grief, and they even had no bruises on their bodies. The Lord very easily lifted the mountain with one hand and placed it on the back of Garuda [the Lord's carrier]. Then, He too got on the back of Garuda and went to the ocean of milk, surrounded by the demigods and demons." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam*, 8.6.37-38)





### **Kurma Churns The Mandara Mountain**

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna incarnated as a tortoise and held the great Mandara Mountain upon His back to be used as a pivot for churning the ocean of milk.



### **Lord Siva Saves The Universe By Drinking Poison**

The churning of the milk ocean produced a poison which was spreading everywhere. Lord Siva felt very compassionate, seeing the living entities disturbed by this danger. He took the whole quantity of poison in his palm and drank it. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam Canto 8 Chapter 7*)



### **Lakshmi devi Appears During the Churning of the Milk Ocean**

Then there appeared the goddess of fortune, Rama, [Lakshmidēvi] who is absolutely dedicated to being enjoyed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. She appeared like electricity, surpassing the lightning that might illuminate a marble mountain. Because of her exquisite beauty, her bodily features, her youth, her complexion and her glories, everyone, including the demigods, the demons and the human beings, desired her. They were attracted because she is the source of all opulences. The King of heaven, Indra, brought a suitable sitting place for the goddess of fortune. All the rivers of sacred water, such as the Ganges and Yamuna, personified themselves, and each of them brought pure water in golden waterpots for mother Lakṣmi, the goddess of fortune. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 8.8.8-10)





### **Dhanvantari With the Pot of Nectar**

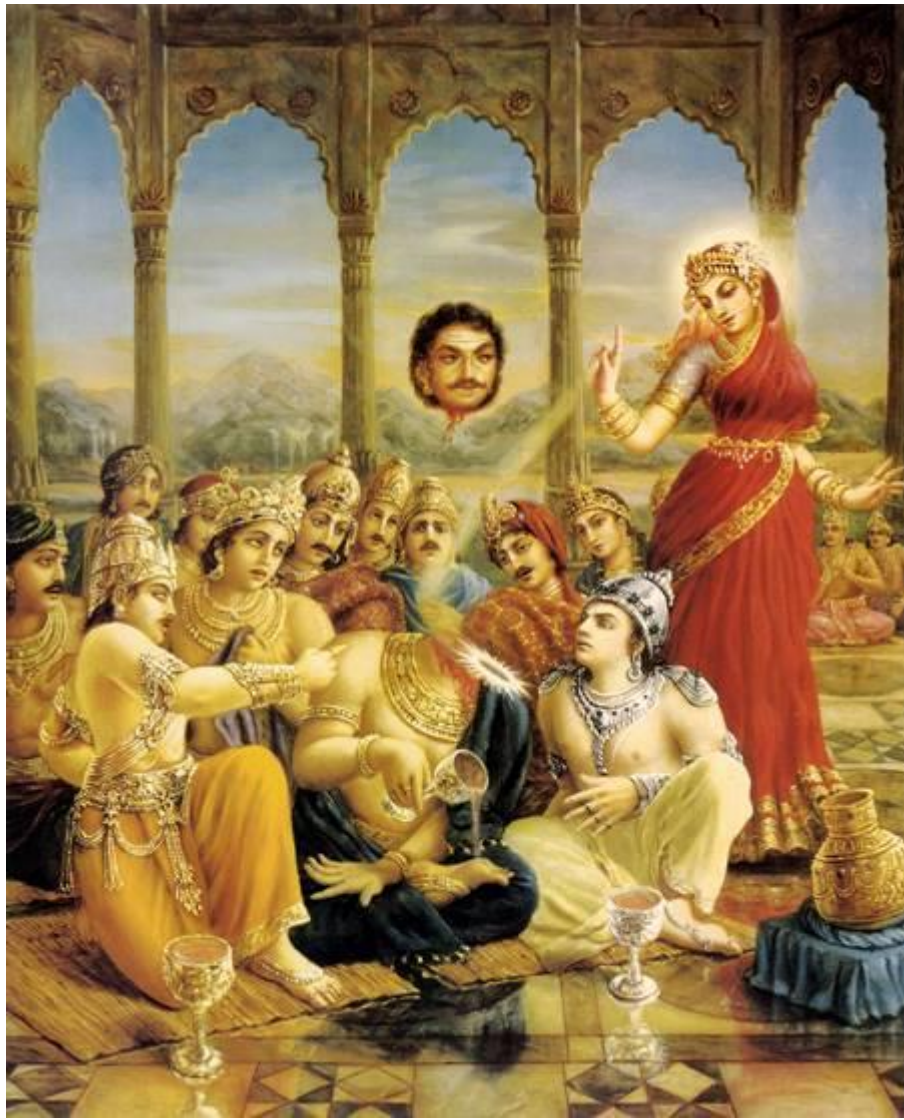
As the demons and demigods churned the ocean of milk, a wonderful male person appeared. He was Dhanvantari, a plenary portion of a plenary portion of Lord Vishnu. He was strongly built; his eyes were reddish and his complexion blackish; and he was decorated with various ornaments and bangles. He carried a jug filled with nectar.



### **Mohini-Murti Enchants the Demons**

When Mohini Murti came before the assembly of demons, they were stunned by her beauty and each one of them thought, just by her glance, that she loved only him. They immediately trusted her completely and requested her to decide which of the demons should drink the nectar first. She spoke to them so sweetly that when she told them she would let the demigods drink first they offered no argument.





### **Mohini-Murti Beheads The Rahu Demon**

Mohini-Murti, the incarnation of the Lord as a beautiful woman, beheaded Rahu as he began to drink the nectar of immortality. Because the nectar had entered his mouth but not yet reached his body, his head became immortal and was accepted by Brahma as a planet. (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 8.9.25-26)



### **Siva Enchanted by Mohini-Murti**

When Lord Siva got to see the form of Mohini-Murti that Lord Vishnu had assumed to trick the demons, he was immediately enchanted by her beauty. He was so infatuated with her that he began to chase her, even in the presence of his wife, Parvati. Finally, after catching up with her, Vishnu appeared, and asked Siva about his experience. Lord Siva was not at all embarrassed by his actions. He was actually very happy and told Lord Vishnu, 'This is my pride; that the whole world knows that I am subordinate to you! The fact that you personally bewildered me shows the world that I am always subordinate to you.'





**Sri Jaganmohini Keshava Swamy Temple at Ryali**





**Sri Jaganmohini Keshava Swamy Temple at Ryali**



**Courtyard of Lord Sri Jagan Mohini Keshava Temple**





**Lord Keshava (left) and Lord Jagan Mohini (right)**





**Sri Jaganmohini Keshava Swamy Temple at Ryali**



**Beautiful fields near Ryali**





**Beautiful fields near Ryali**

**Directions to reach Ryali:**

Ryali is a small village situated between the rivers Vashishta and Gautami, tributaries of River Godavari. Ryali is only an hours' drive (40kms) from Rajahmundry. Rajahmundry is well connected by Road, Rail and Air to rest of India. There are number of daily flights from Hyderabad to Rajahmundry.

**Rajahmundry Yatra:** [www.dandavats.com/?p=12588](http://www.dandavats.com/?p=12588)

**The Mohini-murti Incarnation Bewilders Lord Siva:** <https://www.vedabase.com/en/sb/8/12>

**ISKCON Vishakhapatnam:** <http://www.iskconvizag.org/>

**ISKCON Rajahmundry:** [www.iskconrajahmundry.com](http://www.iskconrajahmundry.com)

**ISKCON Tirupati:** <http://www.iskcontirupati.org/>

**ISKCON Guntur:** <http://iskconkondaveedu.com>

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